

1. What motivated you to start a CART?

Hurricane Isabel was fast approaching. After calling shelters/sanctuaries within Fluvanna County, I found that no one had a disaster plan. There was no plan to shelter animals for residents of the county. As it happened, there were houses that suffered damage and humans had to be relocated. There was no place for their animals to go, unless families had the resources to afford boarding facilities or hotels that were pet friendly. For multi-pet households, this was probably not an option.

Someone had to take the lead, so I decided it would be me. I had the advantage of working for the county and knowledge of county policies and procedures.

2. Who were your key players?

I represented the county. Other players included representatives from the Fluvanna SPCA, Caring for Creatures Animal Sanctuary, Virginia Cooperative Extension Service, and the Sheriff's Department. At first, the Sheriff's Department was represented by an ACO; later the Chief Deputy took over this role.

When we first formed the CART, many people were involved; Environmental Health, the Health Department, the Assistant County Administrator, members of the community who owned large farms, Camp Friendship, VDOT, special interest groups, staff from the Humane Society of the United States, Virginia Federation of Humane Societies. We utilized local resources and help from outside sources, as needed.

3. Challenges that you over came?

Where to shelter the animals? We approached residents that owned properties that we thought might be appropriate. This was minimally productive. The county stepped up and offered a public building, which was a big help. Where to find equipment? We asked for donations. The FSPCA and Caring for Creatures offered their extra crates, bowls, etc. How to identify volunteers? We contacted people who already volunteered with various animal organizations, and placed free ads in the local newspapers. We borrowed forms and printed materials from HSUS until we had time to develop our own Fluvanna County materials. We faced our own learning curve, and found resources for training. Eventually, we were recognized by our Local Emergency Planning Committee – and got a “seat at the table”. Then, we were included in the county budget.

4. Recent activities

The Virginia Cooperative Extension Service had money to fund our first “agricultural” trailer. The money from the county was used to stock the trailer. We got a \$20,000.00 grant to fund our “pet” trailer, which will come fully

stocked. HSUS planned to do training for us in March, but we did not get enough people to sign up for the training, so it was cancelled. HSUS has scheduled us for training in July that is only two days and cost less, so we are hopeful that it will be successful with regards to registrations. If it isn't, we will move forward and hold our own trainings. F-CART is included in the trainings, tabletop, mock disasters, etc. that are regularly held by the Local Emergency Planning Committee.

Most of what we do to keep our skills "tuned", cause us to inventory our trailers, and work as a team, are local "emergencies". We vote, as a team, on whether or not to participate in emergencies and situations that are brought to our attention. These have included applying for a grant to spay/neuter feral cats, respond to animal hoarding, barn fires, helping people who have rescued agricultural animals from dire situations, staffing our local shelter when they didn't have staff to care for the animals, providing a generator for our local SPCA during storms when we didn't have electricity, We respond as best we can to requests from the public.

Fluvanna County has not been able to locate a funding source for a generator large enough to operate our current shelter location, so we are in the process of approaching the county for another space that does have a generator.

We act as a resource for other counties who contact us, looking for information on how to form a CART. F-CART representatives meet with these individuals, offer to share information, forms, and provide guidance through the process.

We recently brought a resolution before the Fluvanna County Board of Supervisors' to allow for increased rabies vaccination compliance; and public vaccination clinics necessary in order to meet the need in the County, as supported by the local veterinary community;